



## Kalište as a memento

(15 August) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď Jaroslav Naď honoured the victims of the burnt-out village of Kalište. Marking the 75th anniversary of the village being burnt down by the Nazis during WW2, the annual national commemoration was also attended by Prime Minister Igor Matovič, Parliamentary Chairman Boris Kollár and other guests. This occasion also marked the 15th anniversary of the "Meeting of Generations" organised by the Slovak Anti-Nazi Fighters Association.

Paying tribute to the Kalište victims, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Even today, the unspeakable atrocities which befell the inhabitants of our country during the Second World War are a reminder of what human evil and the spread of hatred may cause. Today we commemorate together the memory of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice – by losing their lives during the Nazi reprisals. We must never forget them. We also owe this to our heroes who fought to win freedom for us."

Commenting on the importance of the commemoration, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Questioning historic events is absolutely inadmissible and unacceptable. It is up to us not to forget this chapter of our history and speak about it with the young generation, so that they can form their own opinion and should not be easily influenced by deceptive information."

The mountain village of Kalište was torched and its residents executed by Nazi troops in the early hours of 18 March 1945. Kalište was declared a National Heritage Site in February 1961.



## Miners commemorated in Handlová

(10 August) To mark Victims of Mining Disasters Day, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď attended a commemorative ceremony at the Miners Memorial in Handlová, paying tribute to the memory of all miners and rescuers who have lost their lives in the course of performing their duties. The ceremony was also attended by Prime Minister Igor Matovič, Parliamentary Chairman Boris Kollár, Deputy Parliamentary Chairmen and Members of Parliament.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Today we mark the 11th anniversary of the worst mining tragedy in our contemporary history. White Roses Day commemorates all those who chose this very challenging job, but did not make it back home to their loved ones from their mines. We honour their memory."

The Handlová colliery disaster occurred in Handlová on 10 August 2009. That day 20 miners and mine rescuers, trying to put out a fire, lost their lives in an underground explosion. Slovakia has marked Victims of Mining Disasters Day since 2010, when the SVK Parliament declared it as a memorial day. It is dedicated to all victims of mining accidents to have occurred across the Upper Nitra region and the whole of Slovakia.

## Soldiers' needs and best comprehensive offer to be decisive

(10 August) The Slovak Armed Forces' requirements and the best comprehensive offer will decide how US FMF funding worth \$50 million under ERIP will be spent. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Of course, the choice of what the Armed Forces need rests with soldiers. At present, the requirements of the SVK Armed Forces are being gathered and summarised and we will further work with them and then make a decision." How effectively the money will be spent will be overseen by a team of experts, led by Defence State Secretary Marian Majer.

Minister J. Naď, Defence State Secretary M. Majer, Director General of the MOD's Modernisation Department J. Zekucia and representatives of the SVK Air Force attended an information briefing by representatives of Bell Textron Inc. "Today, Bell helicopters are in service with specialist elements of the SVK Ministry of Interior. This opens up opportunities for wider cooperation between both ministries, including saving costs for training, maintenance and logistics," said the Minister, emphasising that of great importance will be the company's comprehensive offer, which the MOD will analyse and compare with other alternatives. He added that the aim of the MOD leaders is to deliver high quality equipment which service members can rely on.

Most importantly, it is the comprehensive offer for service members and Slovakia as a whole that will be decisive in the final decision-making process. "No way do we want to miss out on this US offer," concluded the Minister.



- Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď has had a new **external adviser for domestic defence industry** since 1 Aug 2020. Peter Koreň was nominated for this position by the SVK Security and Defence Industry Association (ZBOP).

- **Phase 1 initial military training** for 153 future cadets, of whom 39 are women, is underway between 3 Aug and 18 Sept 2020 at the Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Martin. On completion of the basic training programme with the swearing of the Oath of Allegiance, 129 cadets will start their studies at the Armed Forces Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš, 14 cadets at the Aviation Faculty of the Technical University in Košice, and 10 cadets at the Faculty of Military Medicine in Hradec Králové.

- Working closely with the Engineer Battalion under the "**Find Your Home**" SVK Armed Forces project, the Sereď-based Centre for Children and Families has prepared a week-long tent camp full of military themed activities and training such as setting up a tent, building a camp, Skill at Arms (SAA), self-defence and survival training.

- As part of the "Find Your Home" SVK Armed Forces project, the Presidential Guard of Honour prepared a **sporting programme** for kids from the Centre for Children and Families in Bernolákovo.

- The Lake Green Water Resort, located in Nové Mesto nad Váhom, hosted a **Great Children's Day** with a presentation of the SVK Armed Forces as well as static and dynamic demonstrations by soldiers of the 12th Mechanised Battalion Nitra and the Engineer Battalion Sereď.

- The Day Camp, organised by the **Domino Leisure Centre in Nitra**, saw its kids visiting the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra on 12 August. They learned about the Brigade's weapons and equipment and watched demonstrations by combat medics and signalmen. Finally, they were treated to a tug of war, a dummy grenade throw, and a relay run.

- Drivers are advised by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be **Allied road movements**, involving US, CZE, HRV and POL troops returning from exercises, across Slovakia from 17 to 23 Aug 2020. Over the same period, there will be several SVK Army round trip convoys on the following routes: Martin – Trebišov, Trebišov – Veľké Ozorovce, Zemianske Kostolány – Michalovce, Zemianske Kostolány – Nitra, Nováky – Záhorie, and Zemianske Kostolány – Trenčín.

**This week Regina Radio's Full Field Kit, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on live fire exercises and training at Lešť. Please, send your suggestions and opinions to [plnapolna@mod.gov.sk](mailto:plnapolna@mod.gov.sk).**

## Training in deep search for unexploded ordnance

(12 August) Members of an EOD unit from the EOD and CBRN National Centre brushed up on their skills to carry out deep searches for unexploded ordnance (UXO). Apart from disposal of explosive material, conventional munitions of known and unknown design and improvised explosive devices (IED), among the EOD unit's key tasks was to search for unexploded ordnance up to 7m deep in the ground. To do so, EOD specialists are equipped with the FEREX magnetometer. The training was aimed at applying the magnetometer in



the field, evaluating detected signals, filtering false detections, ensuring a manual access to munitions, identifying munitions based on their external characteristics, unearthing munitions and determining the state of their initiation devices. This phase was preceded by thorough familiarisation with a technical manual on WW2 aerial bombs,

including the fuses used in different types of WW2 bombs. The training finished off with the destruction of functional munitions at a safe site. Junior EOD experts demonstrated their high theoretical and practical readiness.

## US experts to serve in SVK

(11 August) The Ministry of Defence has initiated interdepartmental consultations on the proposed agreement with the presence of US military personnel on Slovak soil. Their mission will be to provide advice and training to members of the SVK Armed Forces. If the proposal is approved, the four members of the US Armed Forces will assume a training and advisory role in developing the capabilities of the SVK CIMIC and PSYOPS Teams. In addition, this will deepen the capabilities of the SVK Armed Forces that are instrumental to delivering Slovakia's commitment to make a contribution to the NATO Immediate Response Force (IRF). If approved, members of the US military will be deployed to Martin Garrison, with 1 October 2020 as the start date of the 36-month-deployment on a 9-month rotational basis. The costs associated with their presence will be paid by the US side.

## FIN Ambassador visits MOD

(13 August) State Secretary of the SVK Ministry of Defence Marian Majer met with Ambassador of the Republic of Finland Jukka Pesola. Today's conversation was dominated not only by the bilateral defence cooperation between Slovakia and Finland, but also by the SVK Government's foreign policy and security goals and priorities, the modernisation programmes in the SVK Armed Forces, and the strengthening of multilateral cooperation at EU and NATO levels. Ambassador Pesola was provided an update on State Secretary Majer's visit to Finland next week.

## Motorcyclists at Trenčín Airport



(14 August) The second week of August saw motorcyclists of the SVK Military Police, the CZE Military Police and the Office for Protection of Constitutional Members (SVK Ministry of Interior) training together on a runway of Trenčín

Airport. The purpose of the training activity was to improve the riding skills of military policemen – motorcyclists and share their expertise. SVK military policemen operate the Honda VSR 800Xs, while their colleagues from the Escort Section, Personal Protection Command, MP Department Prague, use the BMW R1200. It is not easy to keep perfect control over the Honda motorcycle, which, equipped with side and top boxes, a beacon and an audio warning device, weighs over 250kg. At Trenčín Airport, the motorcyclists practised riding at low speeds, controlling the motorcycles' centre of gravity and stability, manoeuvring through narrow spaces in order to develop the skills necessary to escort VIP delegations through busy cities. Towards this end, they made the best of a series of obstacles, set up by the CZE MP personnel, which had to be negotiated continually without touching the ground. It was not a piece of cake at all, even within a reasonable time limit, but the participants of the training activity completed their tasks very well.